Summer Food Safety Tips

Food poisoning is common during the summer because the risk of foodborne illness increases when the weather begins to warm. Weather you are barbecuing, taking food to a picnic or packing a summer lunch food safety is important. Use the following safety tips to prevent illness for your family this summer:

· Always use a clean plate to transfer cooked foods from the barbecue. (Cross contamination is an easy way to spread bacteria.)

· Sanitize cutting boards used for meat, poultry and fish products with chlorine bleach. (teaspoon chlorine bleach/quart water)

· Cook ground meat and poultry well done. (Internal temperature must reach 160ºF,) If you do not have a thermometer, prick poultry with a fork and the juices should run clear. Ground meat should be cooked so they are no longer pink.

· Precooking poultry and thick cuts of meat to two-thirds done in microwave or oven before barbecuing will cut down on cooking time and prevent foods from burning and being served under cooked.

· Wash hands with soap and water before preparing food and after handling raw meat or poultry.

· Always wash hands before eating. Following these four simple rules will help keep food safe this summer:

1. **KEEP IT CLEAN**
2. **COOK IT WELL**
3. **DON'T WAIT, REFRIGERATE**
4. **IF IN DOUGHT THROW IT OUT**